

Our Vision

To be a recognized leader and innovator in the provision of support services to ensure efficient, effective, safe and coordinated use of mass transit resources (for public benefit).

Our Mission

To assist in meeting the mass transportation needs of South Carolina's citizens by providing statewide transportation planning and research; administration of state and federal funds and assistance programs; evaluation of existing and proposed programs and of coordination of mass transit programs.



TASC holds 30th Annual Training Event & Exhibition

Now in its thirtieth year of existence, the Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC) once again held its annual training event and exhibition in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. This year, the dates were March 19th through the 23rd and the venue was the Hilton Myrtle Beach Resort.

For the thirtieth year, transit agency executive directors and general managers; board members; human resource managers; procurement managers; finance managers; maintenance managers; training managers; vehicle operators; safety managers; consultants, vendors and suppliers to the transit industry; human service agency staffs that provide public transportation; local, state and federal officials; and a host of others who have an interest in public transportation, gathered to learn, share, network and be inspired over three and a half days.

The annual event is intended to improve the knowledge, professional and technical skills of the attendees. It is also intended to be a showcase for the many industry manufacturers and suppliers allowing them to bring their wares and services before their current and potential customers. In addition to seeing the latest in modern transit vehicles and asset management tracking software, one could receive training on such diverse subjects as Violence in the Transit Workplace, Marketing Transit to All Users and Understanding the SC Procurement Code.

At this year's event, members were honored to have Mr. William (Bill) Millar, president of the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) in attendance. He addressed the group and served on a discussion panel.

There was special board member training on Sunday, March 20th and a reception with exhibitors followed by a banquet and awards ceremony that evening. The highlight of the evening, of course, was the annual presentation of awards to the individuals and organizations deserving of outstanding recognition among their peers (See photo spread of 2011 Office of Public Transit and TASC Award Winners on page 2) as well as the top finishers in the 2010 TASC Mass Transit Rodeo (See 'South Carolina bus drivers, mechanics compete in Mass Transit Rodeo in Columbia', TRANSITLINES, Fall, 2010, page 1).

2011 Office of Public Transit and TASC Award Winners



Public Transit Provider of the Year (Urban)
Pee Dee Regional
Transportation Authority



Public Transit Provider of the Year (Rural)
Darlington Transit –Pee Dee Regional
Transportation Authority



Most Improved Transit System
Greenlink – Greenville
Transit Authority



SCDOT OPT Director's Award
Lower Savannah Council
of Governments



Special Service Award (Urban)
Susan Richards
of SR Concepts



Special Service Award (Rural)
Lower Savannah Council
of Governments



Best Driver of the Year –Transit System
(Urban) **William F. Hobbs** of Aiken
Area Council on Aging, Inc.



Best Driver of the Year – Transit System
(Rural) **Tanya Denise Thompson**
of Chester County Connector

2011 Office of Public Transit and TASC Award Winners



Best Driver of the Year – Paratransit (Urban)
Venca Cain Sinclair
of Pee Dee RTA



Best Driver of the Year – Paratransit (Rural)
Mary Frances Bufkin of Williamsburg
County Transit System



TASC President's Award
Dana Spurgeon of National
Bus Sales



TASC Outstanding Service Award
Terecia Wilson of SCDOT Office
of Public Transit



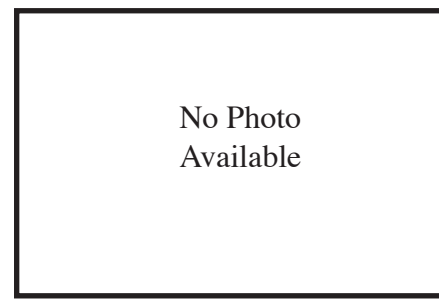
TASC Excellence Award – **Carolyn Wolfe**
Retired SCDOT OPT
Financial Analyst



TASC Shining Star Award– **Peter Tarpley**
SCDOT Videographer



TASC Shining Star Award – **Ann Schaeffer**
Pee Dee RTA



TASC Shining Star Award – **Theresa Metts**
Tri-County Link

Easter Seals Project Action selects Lee County Transit Task Force for new initiative

The recently formed Lee County Transit Task Force has been chosen by the Easter Seals Project Action organization to participate in a new program called the Accessible Transportation Coalitions Initiative (ATCI).

The Accessible Transportation Coalitions Initiative is a one-year systems change process designed to improve accessible transportation options for people with disabilities in local communities. Easter Seals Project Action has selected ten communities through a competitive application process to participate in ATCI in 2011. The Federal Transit Administration has provided final approval of those ten communities and the Lee County Transit Task Force, also known as the Lee County Regional Task Force, is one of the ten communities that will receive assistance.

Selected communities will receive on-site facilitation at a two-day event held in the community. As a one-year process, ATCI supports the creation and maintenance of strong and equal linkages among the disability community, the transportation industry, and other community groups interested in transportation; ATCI attracts commitment at the highest levels of organizations to work on transportation solutions; ATCI assists a coalition to either build on or create a new plan to address transportation issues; ATCI promotes meaningful systems change in accessible transportation within livable communities; and ATCI provides a one-year follow-up technical assistance program to support the coalition's effort to accomplish the plan.

An accessible transportation coalition is 15 to 25 leaders who come together to form a coalition that reflects the diversity of a community. The coalition should include:

- Transportation providers (e.g. human service agencies, taxi operators, schools, volunteers, public transportation operators);
- People with disabilities who use public transportation;
- Other transportation customers (e.g. older adults, bike and pedestrian advocates, and recent immigrants);
- Individuals engaged in the technical aspects of transportation planning (e.g. planners, engineers, rural, regional and/or metropolitan planning organization (MPO) staff);
- Community leaders in formal leadership roles (e.g. elected officials and transit board members); and
- Other highly engaged members of the community who might not be currently working on accessible transportation issues, but who promote public transportation.

Events under the initiative will occur from May to November of this year. The first two-day event has already been announced: a kick-off will be held on August 2-3, 2011 at the Gibbs Community Training Center in Bishopville, SC. If you would like more information about this initial event, see "FYI" on page of this issue. It is hoped that this new initiative will give additional momentum to the Lee County Regional Task Force's goal of creating scheduled flex bus routes in Lee County. It is further hoped that a similar goal can be reached in either Clarendon and/or Kershaw Counties.

The Lee County Regional Task Force was formed in July, 2009 with a stated goal of bridging transportation gaps in the Lee County area. In time, the group hopes to expand its efforts to other counties in the Santee-Lynches Region of South Carolina. Ms. Bettie V. Scott of Bishopville is the chairperson of the group.

Assisted Rides Program begins in Santee-Lynches Region

Seniors and adults with disabilities living in the Santee-Lynches region of South Carolina now have another option for getting to necessary destinations when no other option is available to them. Called the Assisted Rides Program, the service is for residents of Clarendon, Kershaw, Lee and Sumter Counties who are 60 years of age and older or any adult who has a disability if they don't already have assistance with transportation. Destinations can include hospitals, doctors, dentists, pharmacies, assisted living facilities, grocery stores, state, county and federal offices, etc.

The rides are provided by drivers living in the area who are volunteering their time and their vehicle. Drivers are private individuals and some may be private companies.... all in a volunteer status. Drivers are screened to ensure that they have a safe driving record, no criminal record, and are medically capable of driving. Vehicles, also, will be checked for safety and the required insurance. In addition, the program will provide extra liability and medical coverage for drivers and passengers.

There is no cost to use the service but donations are encouraged to help defray the cost of trips. Initial start-up funding came from the SAGE (Supporting the Advancement of Geriatric Excellence) Institute and other private donations. The program is also funded from a New Freedom (FTA 5317) grant obtained through the Lieutenant Governor's Office on Aging and the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit. Recently, these two agencies have agreed to

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NEWS YOU CAN USE!

By now, most transit operators across the country are aware that the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has mandated requirements that will impact communications and data services that they use every day. These changes were originally announced back in 2004 but the time is now growing closer for their implementation. The Federal Transit Administration wants to be pro-active in advising transit operators to start assessing NOW whether or not or how they may be impacted by the changes.

Specifically, the requirements mandate that all non-federal public safety licensees using 25 kHz radio systems migrate to a narrowband width (12.5 kHz or lower) channel by January 1, 2013. The process, called "narrowbanding" or "refarming", may result in operators requiring new or modified licenses. Some may even be required to update, modify or replace their equipment to bring systems into full compliance. Radio systems that do not meet the FCC's requirements could face possible loss of radio communication, substantial fines, or revocation of licenses.

As of January 1, 2011, the FCC is no longer granting any more applications to expand existing or new systems for 25 kHz channels. Beginning January 1, 2013, land mobile radio systems must use the narrowband by migrating to at least 12.5 kHz technology. This change will impact all Part 90 land mobile radio users in frequency bands between 150-174 MHz and 421-512 MHz who currently use 25 kHz wideband channels. This includes all radio systems traditionally used by transit operators for communications between dispatchers and drivers,

including walkie-talkies, and for basic data oriented services such as automated vehicle location (AVL) systems. The FCC mandate may have severe impacts on selected radio communications unless affected transit operators retune their equipment, re-engineer their systems, make modifications to their FCC licenses, or in some cases, replace their entire radio systems by the cut-off date.

The FTA is working closely with the transit industry and other stakeholders on the "narrowbanding" issue and they are coordinating their efforts with the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) and the National Transit Institute (NTI) to help organize training sessions and webinars on "narrowbanding".

To find more background information on this important topic, see FTA's website at: <http://www.fta.dot.gov>. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact **Mr. Raj Wagley**, General Engineer, FTA Office of Technology at (202) 366-5386 or raj.wagley@dot.gov.

— Information from "Dear Colleague" letter released on April 19, 2011 by Peter Rogoff, Federal Transit Administrator, which can be viewed in its entirety at: http://www.fta.dot.gov/printer_friendly/news_events_12634.html

.....AND MORE NEWS YOU CAN USE!

There is a new video, available on DVD, promoting the use of public transportation in South Carolina. Although it could be shown anywhere, this video has a distinctly South Carolina flavor. That's because it was shot here using South Carolina transit vehicles and South Carolina riders giving their testimonials.

Partnering with the Transportation Association of South Carolina (TASC), the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit jointly released the video entitled "Public Transportation Takes Us There". It made its debut at the 2011 TASC Annual Training Event and Exhibition in March and was shown publicly for the first time during this year's National Transportation Week held from May 15 through 21, 2011. Under the supervision of SCDOT Videographer Peter Tarpley, a hired film crew shot the scenes over a few days in early March. SCDOT Office of Public Transit Safety and Training Manager Terecia Wilson served as the executive producer of the video. Now the DVD is available free of charge to interested parties for use in promoting public transportation in South Carolina. In fact, all of the state's public transportation partners are encouraged to schedule and make presentations to civic groups and other public and private groups, as appropriate, to build support for public transportation in our state.

Additionally, you can ask for a "toolkit", a leaflet which was developed jointly by TASC and the Office of Public Transit for this year's observance of National Transportation Week. This toolkit contains much useful information and ideas that can be utilized all year long in reaching out to civic organizations, businesses, industry groups, schools, senior centers and many others to show how public transportation can make a difference in people's lives...and, indeed, already has! To get a copy of the "Public Transportation Takes Us There" DVD and/or the toolkit, contact **Terecia Wilson** at the SCDOT Office of Public Transit at (803) 737-1129 or e-mail wilsontw@scdot.org

extend the funding for another year with the possibility of more funding extensions to come after that.

The Assisted Rides Program is supported by the Santee-Lynches Regional Council of Governments and endorsed by the South Carolina AARP, the State League of Women Voters, and the Sumter Shepherd's Center among many others.

Volunteer drivers who donate their time will receive initial and quarterly driver's training (defensive driving, first aid, etc.). They will also receive approximately 22 cents per mile to help them defray the cost of providing the trip.

To learn more, to volunteer to be a driver, or to get a ride if you live in the Santee-Lynches Region, contact **Ms. Sharon Madhlangobe**, Mobility Manager, at the Santee-Lynches Aging & Disability Resource Center in Sumter at (803) 775-7381 or 1-800-948-1042.

Greenville site of new bus manufacturing plant

A new generation of bus is now being built in Greenville, South Carolina. Over 120 employees were recently hired in the upstate to assemble a radically different looking bus that may well revolutionize the type of buses used by the transit industry here in America and around the world. The company, known as Proterra, Incorporated, will produce buses that are battery-powered and can be re-charged in ten minutes or less.

On January 27th, the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood, came to Greenville and toured the plant along with Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff, SCDOT Office of Public Transit Director Doug Frate, SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles, and SCDOT Commissioner Johnny Edwards (See photo at bottom right).

The group saw how quickly new technology allows the Proterra bus to be re-charged and put back on the road again. The batteries on these buses use innovative technology to re-charge in 5 to 10 minutes, compared to older battery-powered buses that may require an overnight charge. Each fast charge is good for 30 miles. Appealing qualities of battery-powered buses include zero emissions and little noise produced.

SCDOT Office of Public Transit Director Doug Frate said, "I'm excited for the potential of this technology. Once we see greater distances, (for traveling on a re-charge) I think you will see more applications of these vehicles. And

then, you'll see the cost come down, just like anything else. To reduce our dependence on foreign fuel has an impact to the bottom line operational costs."

Frate also noted that SCDOT helps transit providers (in South Carolina) with vehicle purchases by assisting them with procurement, contracting and bid specifications. He further said, "We do have opportunities within South Carolina in our vehicle acquisition program to take advantage of potential applications (of battery-powered buses) and introduction of their (Proterra's) vehicles within the state."

Jeff Granato, president and CEO of Proterra, Incorporated, said that he expects the workforce in Greenville to grow from 120 to 250 by the end of 2011. Granato further stated, "We are working aggressively, with local and national support, to break ground on a larger Phase II plant on the Clemson University International Center for Automotive Research (ICAR) campus this spring."

According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, over the past five years, Congress and the Federal Transit Administration, with a boost from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), have provided roughly \$93 million to fund research, development, and testing of fuel cells and other alternative energy sources to power clean, fuel-efficient transit vehicles.

— Information from "SC gets a charge out of Greenville's new buses", by Bob Kudelka, SCDOT, The Connector, Winter 2011, page 3.



Shown here, from left, are: FTA Administrator Peter Rogoff, SCDOT Commissioner Sarah Nuckles, SCDOT Office of Public Transit Director Doug Frate, US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood and SCDOT Commissioner Johnny Edwards.

Updates on Ongoing Projects

Statewide Intercity and Regional Bus Network Plan

Earlier this year the request for proposals (RFP) was released by the SCDOT's Office of Public Transit. Two proposals were received and a selection committee met in early April to select the most responsive offeror. RLS & Associates, Inc., a consultant firm based in Dayton, Ohio, with their subconsultant team of J.R. Wilburn & Associates, Inc.; Sprague & Sprague; and SR Concepts, was selected by the committee to complete the plan.

The purpose of the plan is to determine how the SCDOT, local and regional public transit providers and private carriers could work together to develop a financially sustainable network of intercity and regional bus service in South Carolina. The study effort will identify a strategic intercity and regional bus network; the capital and operating needs and costs; and a service implementation plan that can successfully sustain the network.

The consultant team officially began work in mid-May and expects to complete the project and present final deliverables by the end of October, 2011.

SCDOT Passenger Rail Program

Last fall, former Secretary of Transportation Buck Limehouse asked seven South Carolinians to serve on a Freight Transportation and Rail Advisory Committee as specified by the state act (Act 206 of 2010) which established the SCDOT's Division of Intermodal and Freight Programs. One of the original invitees was unable to serve but another individual was asked and agreed to serve in his place. The seven persons are: Fred C. Craft, Jr. of Cheraw; James E. Alexander of Bluffton; Robert W. Parham, Jr. of Summerville; Tora Miller of Columbia; Deborah B. Harwell of Myrtle Beach; Butch Reeves of Greenville; and Phil Byrd of North Charleston.

An initial meeting was held in December, 2010 and a second took place in February, 2011. At these meetings, the committee was informed of the statutory mandates of the Division of Intermodal and Freight Programs and they discussed the path forward.

People in TRANSITION

Lynette Nobles joined the staff of Waccamaw RTA, known as COAST, at the very end of November, 2010 as their office manager. She was formerly with the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce as a supervisor of employment services in Georgetown. Lynette earned an associate's degree in business and accounting from Horry-Georgetown Technical College. She is a Conway native where she now makes her home. Lynette

is married and she and her husband have one daughter and three grandchildren.

Generations Unlimited has a new executive director. She is **Lisa Firmender** who came to the agency in February, 2011. Lisa has over ten years of experience in the field of developmental and behavioral services. She has previously worked with several disabilities and special needs boards in South Carolina as well as with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control. Lisa has a bachelor's degree in special education from Winthrop University. She is a Barnwell, SC native where she now makes her home with her husband and one son.

Also at Generations Unlimited, **Ruthann Shore**, who was formerly in accounting for almost a year at the agency, became the new transportation assistant in early May, 2011. Ruthann has completed some college and is originally from Maryland. She is married with one son, Jacob, who is in military service and recently finished a tour in Afghanistan. She and her husband also have one grandchild and two stepchildren. Ruthann replaces Sharon Whitehead, the former transportation assistant who has left the agency.

The Office of Public Transit said goodbye to financial analyst **Carolyn K. Wolfe** in December. Carolyn was a longtime SCDOT employee, having served in the original Public Transportation Division, the Division of Mass Transit and finally retiring with the Grants Accounting and Management Office after 26 years of total service. We wish her and her family well as she now gets to spend more time with her grandchildren.

Also saying goodbye but not going very far away was **Andrew DeRienzo** who left the Office of Public Transit on March 17, 2011. On that date, he transferred to the Office of Finance & Administration at SCDOT where he continues to serve as a financial analyst in the accounting office. From this office, Andrew will continue to provide support to the Office of Public Transit as he monitors cost allocation procedures for the state's transit providers. Additionally, he will perform other fiscal analysis work for other SCDOT agency functions.

SCDOT Office of Public Transit Director **Doug Frate** was recently elected as a member of MTAP's Steering Committee. He, along with three other newly elected members, will serve a three-year term on this committee (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2014). MTAP is the Multi-State Technical Assistance Program which is supported by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) under the auspices of their Standing Committee on Public Transportation (SCOPT). The program's primary purpose is to help states implement FTA programs; provide feedback to FTA on implementation issues and best practices; and to create a professional network to share best practices, receive technical assistance, and obtain new ideas from other states.



AUGUST 2-3, 2011

**ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION COALITIONS
INITIATIVE KICK-OFF EVENT**

Bishopville, SC

This event will kick-off a one year-long process to support the creation and maintenance of strong linkages among the disability community and the transportation industry. It marks the beginning of the Lee County Task Force's participation in the Accessible Transportation Coalitions Initiative (ATCI), a program sponsored by Easter Seals Project Action. Meetings will begin on both days (August 2 and 3) at 8:00 a.m., with the first day going to 5:00 p.m. and the second day meeting will go to 4:00 p.m. To obtain an invitation, which requires the completion of an event acceptance form, contact **Donna Smith**, training manager for Easter Seals Project Action at (202) 347-3066 or (800) 659-6428 or e-mail at Projectaction@easterseals.com. You may also call **Ms. Bettye Scott** at (803) 428-5053 for local information.

AUGUST 10-12, 2011

**AASHTO, FTA, APTA, & CTAA 2011 STATE PROGRAMS
AND STATE PARTNERSHIPS MEETING**

Washington, DC

Registration is open only to employees of FTA, state DOTs, state associations, transit agencies, and human service agencies. This is an annual information sharing meeting providing opportunities for partners and stakeholders in the public transportation industry to network and share the latest in management and regulatory information. The latest agenda information may be found on the MTAP and AASHTO's Standing Committee on Public Transportation (SCOPT) websites. There will also be a SCOPT Business Meeting on Wednesday (August 10). On-line registration is open until July 22, 2011. Please go to <http://www.transportation.org/meetings/330.aspx> to register for the meeting and to make hotel reservations. For further information, contact Brian Alberts (202) 624-5838 or e-mail at balberts@ashto.org. You may also contact **Lorna Wilson** at FTA (202) 366-0893 or e-mail her at lorna.wilson@dot.gov to determine if you are eligible to attend this meeting.

AUGUST 31, 2011

NARROWBANDING: ARE YOU PREPARED?

Columbia, SC

The National Transit Institute (NTI), in collaboration with the FTA, will be conducting the course at the Central Midlands Regional Transportation Authority headquarters. The course is free to public transit agency and government employees; the fee for contractors and consultants is \$150.00. The course objectives are: How to determine if your current radio system is at risk; developing a timeline and budget for your project; identifying potential funding sources for project implementation; determining your regional interoperability (which may impact your transition); exploring the benefits of narrowbanding for the transit industry; explaining the impacts of non-compliance; and reviewing case studies of transit agencies that have already narrowed their transmissions. If you have any questions regarding the course or the registration process, contact **Fran Conti** at (732) 932-1700, ext. 238 or e-mail her at fconti@ejb.rutgers.edu

OCTOBER 2-5, 2011

**AMERICAN PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
ASSOCIATION (APTA) ANNUAL MEETING & EXPO
2011**

New Orleans, LA

APTA's annual meeting, the premier event of the industry, is a must attend for all transportation professionals. Transit professionals from throughout North America will learn, network, discuss influential topics and find solutions. The meeting includes general sessions and forums focused on current issues facing public transportation and featuring first-rate professional speakers. This year's annual meeting will be held in conjunction with EXPO 2011, the world's largest public transportation trade show. Persons who should attend include transit personnel, policy makers, board members, government agencies, manufacturers, suppliers, and consultants. EXPO 2011 is included in the annual meeting registration. To register, call (866) 397-6564 or go to apta_am@expologic.com. For exhibit space reservations, contact **Kimberly Prior** at sales@aptaexpo.com or 1-800-687-7469, ext. 235. Make sure to register by August 5 to pay the discounted early registration fee. Hotel reservations must be received by September 1, 2011 to receive APTA's discounted room rate.